



Voice of Children

Quarterly Issue

VOC e-Newsletter

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Nepal Earthquake 2015

On 25th April 2015, Nepal was hit by a 7.6 magnitude earthquake at 11:56 am. The massive earthquake killed almost 8,844 and injured more than 22,307 people as of 30th June 2015. It has also driven tens of thousands of people into open spaces and temporary camps in the Kathmandu valley and the rest of the worst-affected districts. The earthquake destroyed many historical landmarks, including the UNESCO World Heritage site temples inside Kathmandu valley. The worst hit regions after Kathmandu Valley (Kathmandu, Lalitpur & Bhaktapur) were Sindhupalchowk, Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Kavrepalanchowk, Dhading, Dolakha, Ramechhap, Gorkha, Sindhuli, Makawanpur and Okhaldhunga districts where hundreds lost their lives in the tremor.



Over 8 million people are estimated to be affected in 39 districts. Children have been the most affected by this disaster. According to UNICEF, 1.7 million children are directly affected by the earthquake and UNFPA reports around 126,000 pregnant women and 200,000 girls of the age 19-29 are badly affected since they are even more vulnerable towards sexual abuses and other forms of violence. As per the Government's latest figures (Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal) there are 595,728 fully damaged and 279,828 partially damaged private houses. Most of the damage is recorded outside Kathmandu.



The target beneficiaries of VOC too are hugely affected by this massive earthquake as most of the reintegrated children and families live in the highly affected districts. Likewise, the beneficiaries of VOC who are living in poor (slum/low rented) areas in Kathmandu are also affected by the earthquake as most of them were living in old houses which are now damaged/collapsed making them homeless.

(Please also see our Bulletin on Nepal Earthquake 2015 for more details)



MAJOR ACTIVITIES OF THIS QUARTER

Psychosocial Support



Traumatized children and fearful people was the impact left by the devastating earthquake that rattled Nepal on 25th April 2015. Millions of children and families were traumatized by the recent earthquake and its subsequent aftershocks. On top of that, rumors relating to another disastrous earthquake on its way, added more to the trauma. In order to help minimize the trauma, various trainings and workshops were conducted by VOC at various locations. The staffs attended trainings on Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) and Counseling so that it's easier to provide counseling services to the children and families living in their work area. Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) was created at various locations to help the children come out of the trauma. The children were kept in tents in an open area and entertained through singing, dancing, drawing and various other activities enjoyed by the children. Various individual counseling sessions and group counseling sessions were conducted for the beneficiary children and their family. Likewise, Teachers' trainings on Trauma were conducted by VOC at various schools and in coordination with the District Education Office and also with District Development Committee, Lalitpur.

External activities:



Yet another external activity was conducted with 36 children in Kakani and Thankot on two different dates. The children danced, sang songs and shared their stories with the social workers during these outings.

Such activities are conducted in order to aware the children about the risks of street life, to encourage them to leave the street life and to inform them about the facilities offered for their basic needs in their vicinity. 36 children living in the streets of Kalanki, Pashupati, Balaju, Swayambhu, Nayabazaar and Lagankhel participated in the event.

Child Development Khazana (CDK) workshop

Child Development Khazana encourages children to save for future, teaches life skills like taking responsibility, team work, self confidence etc and builds entrepreneurial skill by channeling children's entrepreneurial skills and directs these into income generation and employment. Children are the ones who manage and promote CDK. Keeping this in mind, VOC has been operating CDK for street children and at risk children living in the community. In order to provide information about CDK and its functioning to the staffs, a workshop was conducted at the Welcome Centre. CDK is being operated by VOC in coordination with Butterflies, India since September 2013 and has been operating 4 branches in different program units under VOC.

Outdoor visits conducted:

Physical activity in the natural environment not only aids an increased life-span, greater well-being but also increases



ability to perform better. It has also been found to be helpful to lower rates of smoking and substance misuse and minimize symptoms of depression. Outdoor recreation also provides an opportunity to increase quality of life and improve social interaction among the children. Hence keeping this in mind, the children were taken on several outdoor visits including to the Central zoo, nature walk in Hattiban jungle and for swimming. The children enjoy these activities very much and eagerly look forward to the next one.

Dental Health Camp conducted



The healthier your teeth are the happier you look. It's because your teeth are important in many ways. If you take care of them, they'll help take care of you. Strong, healthy teeth help you chew the right foods to help you grow. They help you speak clearly. And yes, they help you look your best. However Gum disease is common but if left untreated, it may lead to teeth being lost and sometimes bone loss around the teeth. It can be treated and kept under control with regular cleaning sessions and check-ups, preventing further problems. Luckily, gum disease is preventable and it can be treated and kept under control by doing regular cleaning and checkups. Hence in order to create awareness regarding dental hygiene and keep dental problems at bay, a Dental health camp was conducted in coordination with Family Development Program at the Preparation Center in Lubhoo. The doctors from Health and Development Society Nepal provided their service in dental health problems to the children of PC and Welcome Centre. Information about good oral hygiene and oral care was shared by the dentists to the children.

5th Intl. Street Children's Day celebration



The world celebrated 5th International Street Children's Day on 12th April 2015. VOC too celebrated as always at the

Preparation Centre, Lubhu organizing various talent shows and competitions among the children of DIC, PC and community. The event was organized by the Child Club and around 200 participants were present. This was an important day for the children because through this event they were provided a platform where they could show their talent.

The children from Welcome Centre, PC and Family Development Program (FDP) performed in the event and were excited and waiting eagerly for this day. The President of VOC, Director, board members, parents, staffs and guests from various organizations were present at the event. Song, Poem, dance performance, jokes and drama were the major highlights for the day. Apart from the talent show, Drawing Competition and Quiz Contest were also organized in PC and Welcome Centre.

Painting workshop conducted

Art therapy can be especially beneficial to children as they are usually less capable and less comfortable expressing themselves



through words. In such a situation painting plays an important role. Children's feelings and emotions can be found out through their painting. Preparation center organized a Painting workshop for the children living in PC. The children were given orientation on various types of paintings, canvas painting and the use of various colors and its symbolization in painting. The children were asked to choose a topic of their choice and paint. The children actively participated in the event and created beautiful paintings.

Events for Eastern Program Children

Child Club at Eastern Region Program organized a visit to Namaste Waterfall at Dhankuta on 4th June which is a naturally



beautiful place. The children enjoyed the nature and had a great time. Similarly, 16 children along with 2 social workers participated in the movie show on 8th April 2015 at Jhumka Cinema Hall. The movie program was organized in order to develop children's attention skill and refresh them in a different way.

A story of Earthquake Survivor

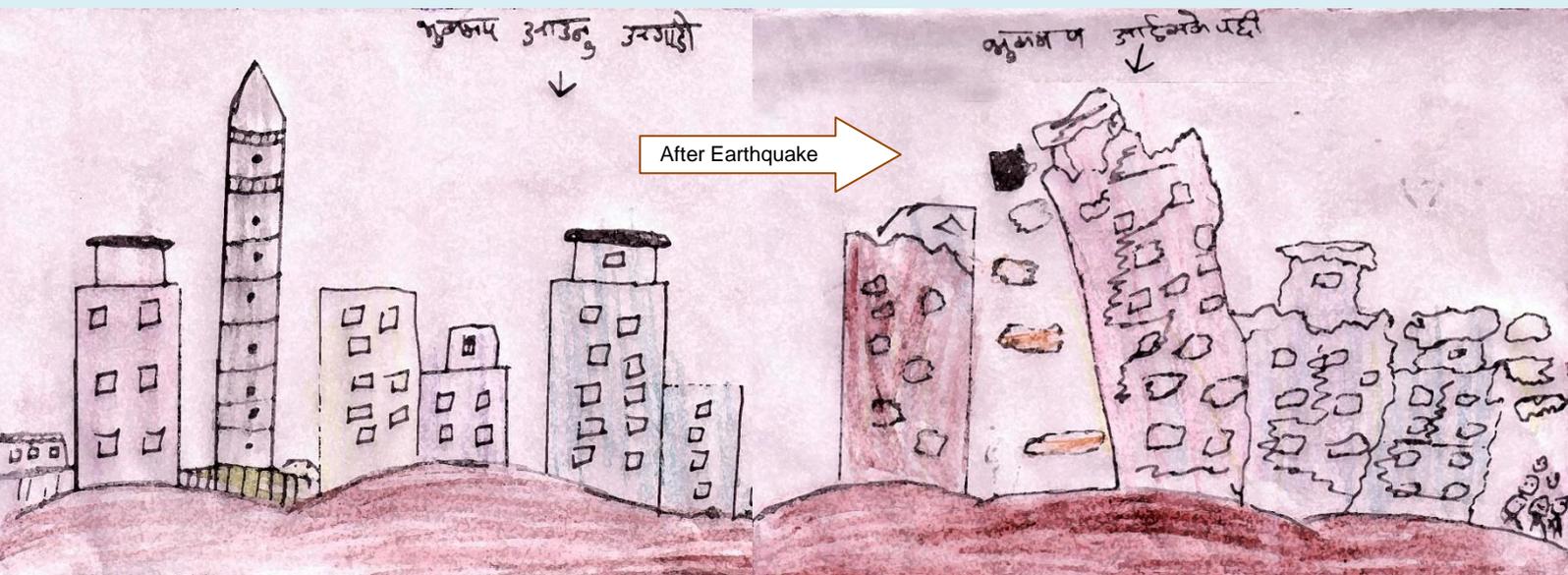


Sunil (name changed), 13 does not remember his father's face as he was toddler when his father passed away. His father used to work as a deep-well cleaner and lost his life while doing the hazardous job. His parents had an inter-cast marriage which was not accepted by their family and society since his mother was from the so called 'lower caste' community. After his father's death they had to go through very hard times since he was the sole breadwinner of the family. However, his mother managed to run the family by doing laborious work. She dreamt of giving her son good education and he was a good student studying in 4th standard. Lately, his mother was working as a cleaner in a small hotel in Balaju, Gongabu. They were happily living in the

rooms provided by the hotel in the same building. On 25th April 2015 when the massive earthquake claimed to death thousands of lives and destroyed numbers of houses and buildings, Sunil was with his mother trapped inside the collapsed hotel building. After one hour of effort from the rescue team, he was rescued from the collapsed building with head injuries but unfortunately his mother was found dead. That dreadful day still roams around his eyes and he sometimes murmurs, "My mother might have been alive but they ran the bulldozer to clean the debris without confirming her death".

The Kathmandu Metropolitan City referred Sunil to Voice of Children. He is now living in VOC's Preparation Center at Lubhu and receiving psychosocial counseling and participating in other regular activities conducted at the center. Such activities have helped him to stay busy and gradually forget the dreadful incident. The Reintegration team has succeeded to trace out his close relatives; his grandfather is in touch with the team. He has not met his grandson since the last 11 years and is excited to adopt him as soon as possible. In the meantime, the team is assessing the condition of the child and his family and planning for his educational and other essential support required to make them self-reliant.

Children's Creations



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